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**10.** How do you think this book is relevant in today's social climate? Is it relatable for young readers today? If so, which themes from the book continue to be relevant in the lives of young children in the United States?

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**11.** Do you think it's important for people who don't necessarily identify with Jacqueline's specific experience to read this book? Why or why not?

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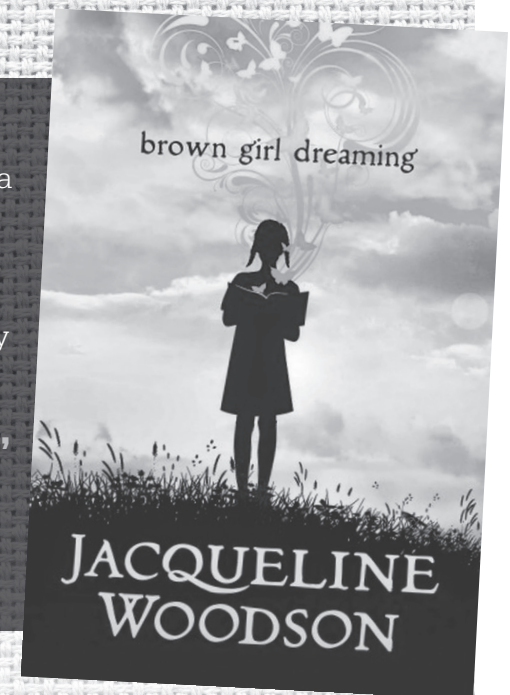
**12.** While growing up, Jacqueline lived in the American North and South at different seasons in her life. How were her relationships, her experiences, and her sense of self shaped by differences in her locations?

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### Discussion Questions

"Ms. Woodson writes with a sure understanding of the thoughts of young people, offering a poetic, eloquent narrative that is not simply a story . . . but a mature exploration of grown-up issues and self-discovery."

- *The New York Times*



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**Jacqueline Woodson**, one of today's finest writers, tells the moving story of her childhood in mesmerizing verse.

Jacqueline Woodson's awards include 3 Newbery Honors, a Coretta Scott King Award and 3 Coretta Scott King Honors, 2 National Book Awards, a Margaret A. Edwards Award and an ALAN Award -- both for Lifetime Achievement in YA Literature. She is the author of more than 2 dozen books for children and young adults and lives with her family in Brooklyn, New York.  
(Source: Amazon.com)

## Book Summary

Raised in South Carolina and New York, Woodson always felt halfway home in each place. In vivid poems, she shares what it was like to grow up as an African American in the 1960s and 1970s, living with the remnants of Jim Crow and her growing awareness of the Civil Rights movement. Touching and powerful, each poem is both accessible and emotionally charged, each line a glimpse into a child's soul as she searches for her place in the world. Woodson's eloquent poetry also reflects the joy of finding her voice through writing stories, despite the fact that she struggled with reading as a child. Her love of stories inspired her and stayed with her, creating the first sparks of the gifted writer she was to become.  
(Source: penguinrandomhouse.com)

## Discussion Questions

1. *Brown Girl Dreaming* is an award winning memoir written in verse. Do you enjoy this format for an autobiography? Even though each chapter/verse is short, do you feel that you got a good sense of the setting or moment that the author was trying to convey?
2. Jacqueline shares her childhood experiences amidst the backdrop of the Civil Rights movement. What role does history play in this book? What can we learn from this first-person perspective of American history?
3. In what ways does Woodson manipulate words, phrasing, and white space in her writing? How does this influence your reading of the book?
4. How does Jacqueline Woodson come to find herself, as told in *Brown Girl Dreaming*?
5. What and/or who are the strongest influences on Jacqueline's identity? How do they help her find her voice?
6. An important theme in the book is family. What does it mean to Jacqueline? What does it mean to you?
7. *Brown Girl Dreaming* was the 2014 National Book Award winner for Young People's Literature, a 2014 Coretta Scott King Award winner, and a 2014 Newbery Honor Book, along with many other impressive reviews and awards. What do you make of this book special?
8. Jacqueline Woodson is a major voice in the campaign for more publication of diverse books. In light of the We Need Diverse Books campaign, do you feel *Brown Girl Dreaming* is a book that promotes diversity and if so, why?
9. What types of discussions do you think the author was hoping to inspire with this book? Why did she give the book this title? What does it say about her? What does it say about the world?